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the feces or anus) as a deterrent medicine for thefts from the field and the significant tale of the turtle and the woman. A turtle wants to force a girl against her will to become his wife, and after all kinds of vain attempts finally succeeds only by smearing the girl's bed and clothes one night with his own feces. Having done so, he lies down to sleep, and the next morning when the girl sees the mess, he threatens to tell in the village and all the world that she had befouled her bed. The turtle thus put the girl completely in his power and forced her to agree to the marriage.

539 the girl going into her mother's house, quickly stole after her
836 through the plantain grove, and listened behind the house to
514 what the girl might say; not by a single word did she mention
the incident. He then went back with a joyful heart, and said to
himself: "This girl truly loves me." After two days he returned,
asked for her hand in marriage, and took her back to his village
as his wife.

This tale gave rise to the popular saying: ng(e) oa dʒi'n ma,
obēbē', ng(e) oa b'ne ma: obēbē'.

832 The great number of love medicines (biān andu'man), which
very graphically symbolize the fusion and embracing of the sexes
(in a spiritual as well as a physical sense), has already been dis-
cussed in Volume II, page 30 .

● 848 Illegitimate children are quite rare. The child's father --
836 even when he is known -- has no claim upon the child, just as
the girl has no claim upon the father. The child belongs to the
girl's father and is regarded as a not altogether unwelcome addi-
tion, since when the girl marries, it considerably raises her purchase
price. As long as the mother remains unmarried, her child stays
in the house of her parents. When she marries, the child becomes
/259/ a part of the marriage bargain, as it were, and is considered

836 entirely as the husband's own. If the mother runs away with a
 849 man -- which sometimes happens -- without taking the child
 along, it is fed by the grandmother whose name it also usually
 bears if it is a girl. It is by no means a disgrace for the girl if
 her sexual relations with young men have consequences.

3. Marriage

835 We have already seen that sexual intercourse within blood
 184 relationship is taboo (eki). Such relationship includes:

1. one's own familial group;
2. the mother's familial group;
3. the familial group of the father's mother.

Formerly this taboo was observed by all Pangwe with uniform strictness, but today it is frequently circumvented. The Jaunde do not always observe it, and the Fang -- of all people, the Fang with their constantly emphasized oson -- have dropped it for the own familial group, but retain it for the other familial groups. To the Ntum and all the other Pangwe this shocking occurrence has been a great irritant, and they never let an opportunity pass of making fun of the immorality of the Fang who "cohabit with their own sisters" or of speaking indignantly about it, without failing at the same time to stress their own great respect for morality and decency. This is done despite the fact that the Ntum themselves have at least in part been corrupted by the bad example of the Fang, and in other respects, too, transgressions against the taboo are not infrequent. The custom of having sexual relations with women of one's own kin group (sisters in the Pangwe sense) is called zāmaduju III or simply zāma III, the verb being a dulu zāma. As can be seen by the prefix class, the name has been derived entirely unchanged from the name for God (zāma) and signifies "to act like Sama," because, as can be seen from the creation story (Vol. II, p. 16 ff. /Ed., not translated/), Sama (Nsambe) had sexual intercourse with his own sister.

835 Where zāmaduju is still taboo, a payment must be made to
 684 the girl's father in case of a violation. The payment varies depending upon the gravity of the offense: a number of goats

583 between 500 and 600 marks in the south. Devaluation of the money, which has also taken place in Africa, has considerably raised the price in comparison to what it was formerly.

The purchase price cannot be paid in money (spear money) alone, in cattle alone, or in any specific type of goods alone; 4% instead, all the objects of exchange which are in circulation 435 must be represented. Thus, in 1906, for instance, the following things were paid for a woman in the Fang region:

6,000 spears	420. -- marks
12 rifles	120. -- marks
2 vats of powder . . .	4. -- marks
70 choppers	70. -- marks
2 sheep	50. -- marks
2 iron pots	8. -- marks
10 pieces of cloth . . .	40. -- marks
5 hats	10. -- marks
13 kettles of salt ②	
2. -- marks	26. -- marks
2 knives	2. -- marks
2 packages of beads . .	2. -- marks
2 tobacco pipes . . .	---. 50 mark
2 packages of flints . .	---. 50 mark
1 hatful of buttons . .	---. 50 mark
	753. 50 marks /261/

Any existing illegitimate children go along with the marriage • [948] bargain. In fact, the bridegroom has to pay 500 spears for a boy and 1,000 spears for a girl; incidentally, he is only too glad to do so, because each child means an addition to his wealth.

I shall not go into a discussion of the endless number of quar- 578rels that arise on the occasion of a marriage, especially when 583 the entire purchase price is not paid at once. Nor shall I speak of the fact that the girl's father likes to steer his daughter, even if she is in love with another, into the hands of the man who can pay the most or the most readily. All this would lead too far afield.

606 If the girl stays in her parents house and if the payment of 583 the purchase price extends over weeks and months, the suitor has 584

346/ circumcision was public, and the woman to whom it was done under-
687/ went the gibes and insults of all the inhabitants.

823 The life of the young people is the same as that of the adults. The
virginity of a woman is considered unimportant and the Fan have

926 sexual relations from the time they are capable of cohabitation. When

- 848 a young girl has a child, it belongs to her parents, from whom the
child acquires wealth; there is no search for the father and the young
girl keeps all the respect which she enjoyed. Young girls are free to
give themselves to whomever they please. This very broad morality,
[515] however, has one important qualification in that there are, so to speak,
no young girls, the little girls having been married off by their parents
very early, sometimes even before their birth.

582 Marriage (alu). Men rarely marry before the age of twenty years,
and usually later, because they do not have the means to pay the dowry
for taking a wife.

582 Exogamy is always practiced because marriage between people of
835 the same tribe is sterile. Marriage between cousins is forbidden up to
the third generation and in general, marriage is forbidden between
persons linked by any kind of kinship; in this case there is also pro-
hibition of sexual relations. No penalty is prescribed for infraction,
[684] but the guilty ones will fall ill and their children, if they have any,
will not live.

582 Occasionally there are instances when marriage between relatives
783 is authorized, but only after the practitioner has removed the pro-
835 hibition by the process [88] called abvule minsem. The practitioner
goes to find some termite earth (ngurege), a plant (mekaga), and a
vine (nyola dzik); the plant and vine are folded and placed in an etok
[645] (a container of banana leaves) full of water. The termite earth is
placed on a nzum (see the description in the section on conception) and
the etok is placed underneath. The two kinsmen who want to marry
also stand underneath it, while the practitioner climbs onto the nzum,
dips the leaves in the etok, and says, "me me o e mi wa ga bo e wo ma
va yui" (I remove every prohibition that you have made). He hits the
termite earth with the leaves and then takes the etok and pours the
contents onto the heads of the two people from whom he is removing
the prohibition. With the remainder, the man and woman each takes
a washing.

583 A man who has not enough dowry but who finds a young girl eager
to marry him may take her away in the night; when the parents come

64 Gabon have given priority to recreating, the regrouping of villages being supposed, in their view, to take place as a function of the regrouping of the meyoñ.

57 The ayoñ includes all the patrilineal descendants of a common ancestor, the illegitimate children of girls belonging to the ayoñ, and adopted ones. The ayoñ has a name, a tattoo mark (ndan), often certain prohibitions (bityi, biki), and perhaps a totem. The most strict exogamy is the rule. All members call themselves brothers (bobenyañ).

Although there was, properly speaking, no real political division corresponding to the ayoñ, nor any organized chiefship—explicable particularly in view of the very scattered settlement pattern of the members—clan sentiment was, and still is, very strong. Periodical meetings, bisulan, bring ayoñ members together, presided over by the eldest (ntôl) of the senior lineage (mvôk, ayôm) (3). The custom

3, Ayôm probably has the same root as nnôm, pl. beyôm = male; it should be remarked that the ayôm is often designated by the name of a female ancestor.

122 of these bisulan has recently been revived /46/; first in the Cameroons, where the native authority was reorganized in 1945-48 along clan lines, then in Gabon, where the meyoñ are in an advanced state of disintegration, above all in the south.

34 An ayoñ, whose villages separated one from the other by villages of other clans sometimes extend over several hundred kilometers, is divided into segments (mvôk) that include the descendants of the brothers, or rather the sons, of the clan ancestor, then /is divided/ into lineages (bisa, meyôm) derived from the descendants of the sons of the ancestor of the segment. The longer the genealogy (mvam, niañ bimvam; meba'a), the more vague these categorical differences become: in one place mvôk is used for what is called ésa nearby and ayôm further away. But, except in southern Gabon, the genealogies are still well preserved, and the majority of adults can trace their relationship, if not to the clan ancestor himself, at least to his lineage. The teaching of these genealogies, which was the core of the traditional training of boys, is dying out with the spread of schooling, but children still know at least the genealogy of their village-family (jal, dzal; nda bôt).

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ndōmenyañ (3rd person) = mother's brother, designating the maternal uncle and all his bōbenyañ (clan or consanguineal brothers); this is a respect relationship;

motate, a contraction of mone tate = son of my father, designating half brothers on the father's side, with an idea of respect;

monēkal = sister's son, designating nephews and uterine cousins with whom marriage is forbidden, although they belong to a different ayōñ; this is a joking relationship; the same term is applied to brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law;

monengon = daughter's son, designating uterine relatives within the clan and particularly sisters' illegitimate children, who are members of the clan but with a certain capitis diminutio, loss of status;

and so forth, relationship always being reckoned by clan, generation, and sex. This is borne out by the way ethnic constructions are formed: a Boulou, a /51/ Yenjōk, are mone bulu, mone yenjōk, a "child of Boulou," a "child of Yenjōk"; a Boulou woman is ngone bulu, a "daughter of Boulou"; two bo'be yenjōk would therefore be brothers, bōbenyañ. What is curious is that this term, the most frequently employed for full brother or half brother on the father's side, clearly refers to a uterine relationship, since it means, literally, "mother's son."

Kinship in relation to order of generations (ndaē = grandchild; ēndil = great-grandchild) entered into the choice of a name (ēyōlē), /a practice that is/ not well understood at present. Even at the present, similarity of biyōlē creates a sort of quasi relationship between the homonyms mimbōm (sing. mbōm) or bemōē (sing. mōē), with the obligation of reciprocal help.

Parents-in-law are beryi (possibly related to ēryi = prohibition?); we shall mention this again in connection with marriage, but it may be pointed out here that the term is applied equally to the first wife considered with respect to her co-wives.

e. Marriage, Descent

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The primary rule of marriage remains the prohibition against incest, the clan exogamy already mentioned. To take a wife from one's own or one's mother's clan is forbidden, also to marry the daughters of lineage sisters to quite a distant degree, even though

586 sterility. In theory, if the facts are self-evident, the repudiating husband ought to obtain ipso facto the return of the nsuba, reduced, however, in proportion to the number of children the repudiated woman has borne him. In practice, the nya ndombé usually makes difficulties and postpones repayment until the woman's remarriage and his collecting the new bride price (1).

1. But nowadays it is common to see the second husband pay the nsuba directly to the first husband, giving the nya ndombé only the eventual increment.

The woman can also take the initiative in divorce: a ke jañ dé; she goes back to her father, blaming the excessive stinginess of the husband who "takes bad care of her," a ba' ale nye abe, his impotence, brutal treatment, or sorcery, or even a grievous insult to her or to her parents. Repayment of the nsuba is obligatory in this case too, except when the husband has committed a very serious offense, usually sorcery or mutilation of the woman.

Finally, divorce may be the action of the woman's nya ndombé: a vaa minga aluk, he withdraws the woman from the marriage, either because ~~he~~ considers her badly treated or because he thinks he has been insulted by his son-in-law or particularly—and more and more often nowadays—because the nsuba has not been entirely paid, or even because he has found another prospective husband willing to pay a higher nsuba. We then witness a real process of extortion, with the nya ndombé relentlessly demanding new presents from the husband under the threat of taking back his daughter. The courts concerned with checking abuses /les tribunaux repressifs/ are almost powerless to penalize these practices, which are very hard to define according to the penal code.

586 In every case legitimate children remain with their father; the
 251 woman can only keep custody of them until they are weaned. The
 948 proverb pater is est has its Fohouln equivalent: Mon ase mone mbiaé,
mon ase mone bitye, "a child is not the child of the genitor, he is
 the child of the 'bride price' (bitye = bride-price money). In principle,
 only a child born after payment of the nsuba in full is considered
 legitimate; in practice, a sort of legitimation by payment after birth
 is recognized when first payments of the nsuba have already been

586 made, but this practice is only very rarely followed in cases of free
 851 union, ébon, even when that is followed by a regular marriage of the
 848 natural parents. Illegitimate children, fruits of an ébon, bobengon,
 are kept in their mother's clan, where, moreover, they rank socially
 only after legitimate children.

597 There used to exist a kind of adoption, rare today, of a political
 614 rather than family nature, which could almost be defined as naturali-
 647 zation. It could only be carried out by the head of an extended family
 on behalf of an orphan, mone nyui, of another clan (orphans within
 /56/ the clan being, of course, already considered children of the
 head of the family). The adopted child, abiaé mōsō (i.e., "conceived
 [833] in the daytime," sexual relations being lawful only between sundown
 and sunrise), came into the clan with a status analogous to that of
 the monengon. He remained subject to the marriage prohibitions of
 his clan of origin.

609 A non-Pahouin outsider permanently residing in a village, a ntabe,
 614 may benefit through marriage by alliance, élat, which does not there-
 by make him a member of the clan. He becomes a monekal (sister's
 son, uterine relative) and his children, though legitimate, belong to
 their mother's clan.

593 The descent relationship may be broken by paternal or maternal
 578 curse, meyo'é: the parent uttering the curse shows the child his
 sexual organs, "the place whence he came," while pronouncing a
 formula oath. The curse is supposed to bring misfortune and death
 to the offspring accursed, whom everyone avoids. It can only be
 [783] lifted by a collective purificatory rite (étye, tyō) in which the whole
nda bōt participates.

3. Age Grades

561 The individual's life cycle is marked by a certain number of
 transitions, which are accompanied, or were usually accompanied, by
 rites that will be discussed further on (p. 115). These crises are birth,
 weaning, puberty, attaining majority, marriage, death. Age
 grades correspond to the intermediate stages; they are less strictly
 defined today than formerly.

561 I do not know the exact word for fetus: people say alum, belly.
 443 There must be a more precise term, but I think there is a prohibition
 connected with it, certainly as regards men, although it may now be

7. The Position of Women(1)

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1. J. Binet, "Condition des femmes /The Position of Women/, " Cahiers internationaux de sociologie, 20, 1956, Presses Universitaires de France, and "Statut des femmes dans le Sud-Cameroun /Status of Women in the Southern Cameroons/, " to appear in Recueils de la Société Jean Bodin, 1956, Edit. of the Librairie Encyclopédique, Brussels.

If the older people are to be believed, the position of women according to orthodox custom was that of minors. However, there is nothing in traditional theory that justifies such a negative attitude towards women: some clans name women among their eponymous heroes, and there are legends attributing to the creator god (Zambé) a daughter in whose honor certain rites were performed. At the present time the tribal societies making an effort to revive the old clans and to revise their codes of manners and their customary laws always keep a place for women at the core of the executive /état-major/, but very often the role of women is secondary: they are dancers, singers, organizers of dances, or stewards watching over followers—in short they only carry out men's orders. Women are also sometimes associated with men in religious /confessional/ societies (Protestant or, more frequently, Catholic), but mostly they form separate groups, formerly so-called secret societies, today Christian devotional confraternities, which enable women to meet together, to set up a hierarchy and have leaders of their own. Women do not actually participate in the life of the community /cité/ or, better, they form a community among themselves, distinct from that of men.

In law women seem to be at a disadvantage, but it is not clear that they owe this to genuine antifeminism. In fact, no one is perfectly free in customary law; only the patriarchal head of a family possesses full legal capacity. Marriage does not confer majority on a woman, and a girl possesses greater independence than does a married woman. In the sexual sphere this is clear: illegitimate births involve no disgrace; a child is always welcome. If born before marriage, it belongs to the mother's family. And it is not unusual for respectable fathers to wait until a daughter has borne children before marrying her off.

181 on the subject of circumcision: "Circumcision, in our view, is
304 connected with the institution of the taboo; it was originally the
779 lifting of a prohibition. Before having gone through this ceremony, a young man cannot marry; he is not acceptable [527] to any woman and he has no right to nuptial relations. And if these should nevertheless, occur -- and they do! -- the child of this forbidden intercourse is accounted 'bad' and must disappear."

• 848 Among the Fan such a child, without being considered exactly "bad," is thought of as not belonging to the tribe. Since the father has not the right to be a father, he cannot give the child a name; and if the child escapes the first vicissitudes of babyhood, it will soon die of neglect and hunger, scorned by all. This is especially the case with mulattoes, whose birth in itself places them outside the tribe. They are found on the coast and near European settlements, where, along with the decline in moral standards, the family has to a great extent disappeared, with the laws that used to guarantee its integrity and corresponding moral code. In the interior, in spite of the passage of numerous traders and explorers whose morals are no better than those of the coast, mulattoes are very rare, to say the least. We have just given the reason for this.

600 "Here," continues Mgr. Le Roy, "we have a typical and interesting illustration of the principle set forth above. The transmission of human life takes place in a mysterious realm where the activity of the Lord of Creation is manifest, or at least taken for granted, and to which man cannot be admitted except by a sort of authorization from God and with the help of an appropriate ceremony. At the indicated time the prohibition may be removed, but as always in such cases the 'use permit' must be bought back by a blood sacrifice, hence circumcision, the moral purpose of which is obvious, because the taboo or prohibition that it ends is a rigorous obstacle to sexual relations between children who have not reached puberty.

"This institution can be found everywhere; to be so widespread it must have a widely applicable raison d'être; this is

597 sacking of a village. For, although in such cases all the men
127 and able-bodied youths are ruthlessly killed and eaten, this
does not apply to women and children, even to male children,
who henceforth belong to the new tribe and will later be looked
upon as warriors. There is no ceremony for women or female
[562] children, since, as we have seen, the totem ignores them,
and they have only one duty toward it, to hide in their huts as
quickly as possible whenever there is talk of the totem, and
never to mention it. Should this nevertheless happen, it would
be an offense requiring expiation.

597 Male children are adopted by the various heads of a family.
Tribal or village chiefs have first choice, the rest of the
warriors come after. The one or more children chosen by a
chief, however, may never succeed him.

597 Adoption ceremonies are like those at birth. The adopted
304 child loses all his old totems in order to acquire those of the
tribe he joins. There is just one additional ceremony, blood-
letting. So as to prove his definitive entry into the tribe, he
undergoes the following operation when led before the totem.
With the mfor knife, a small steel blade kept for this purpose,
the adoptive father makes a few slight scarifications on the child's
left arm, collects the blood that flows, and throws it on the
ancestral skulls, then on the skaméyón. He then takes a frag-
ment of skull and some totemic sacrificial ashes and rubs these
vigorously on the child's arm. This is the true sign of adoption,
by which the boy definitively enters his new family and is
recognized as belonging to it entirely. Later on he may even
be allowed to take a wife from his former tribe, in spite of the
strict law of exogamy, because adoption is so authentic.

• [548] Often the same bloodletting and blood alliance occur
[563] with illegitimate children or with mulattoes, but the object is
then different. Adoption never takes place at birth but much
later, so as to ensure for the child the ancestors' protection.

The same act often occurs when a child is ill. [573]